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ABSTRACT

This guide, based on a survey of more than 100 New York City employers, lists the qualifications needed for 20 entry-level positions. The occupations profiled are as follows: bookkeeper, carpenter, child care worker, computer data entry/programmer, food service aide, home attendant, janitor/cleaner, legal assistant/paralegal, licensed practical nurse, mail clerk, mechanic, nurse's aide, office clerk, receptionist, retail salesperson, secretary, switchboard operator, teacher aide, teller, and waiter/waitress. Each occupational profile provides the following information: (1) description; (2) requirements (education, reading/writing, mathematics, interpersonal/communication, advancement opportunity, and other); and (3) job and skill requirement matrix listing the relative importance of a high school diploma, postsecondary education, and a variety of skills (reading, writing, math, arithmetic, algebra, algebra plus, communications, interpersonal, typing, word processing, filing, computer literacy, and bilingual). An appendix describes five essential work skills: punctuality, attendance, ability to communicate, positive attitude, and teamwork. (KC)

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FIRST STEPS TO SUCCESS

A guide to preparing students for the job market.

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FOREWORD

New York City corporate human resource officers repeatedly state that there are many unfilled entry-level positions in the metropolitan area because not enough young people possess the necessary skills for those jobs.

Entry-level positions are valuable in that they provide young people with a point of entry into the labor market and help them develop skills and experience that will enable them to obtain higher level positions. Unfortunately, the overwhelming majority of New York City youth (over 75% by Bureau of Labor Statistics) are not involved in the labor market at any level.

While the media has focused on the problems youth have with basic skills, human resource officers state that the problems are actually twofold: one, many youth do not have the technical and basic skills required for the job; and two, they do not have many of the interpersonal skills necessary for success in the work world. These so-called 'soft skills' have become increasingly important as service-sector jobs dominate our economy.

The New York City Partnership decided to try and ascertain exactly what the qualifications are for some of the fastest growing entry-level jobs. We wanted to go beyond the obvious technical skill requirements (e.g., typists have to type 50 words per minute) and look at the interpersonal characteristics that employers see as crucial, as well as the levels of math, reading and writing required for particular jobs.

The Partnership surveyed more than one hundred New York City businesses regarding the job requirements for some 20 entry-level positions, asking each of the respondents to tell us what their requirements were in three separate skill areas:

- technical skills
- basic skills
- interpersonal skills

While we found that requirements for various positions differed, we also discovered that the kinds of interpersonal characteristics that employers looked for in prospective employees were basically the same, whether the employer was seeking a receptionist or a computer programmer.

When asked which interpersonal skills they viewed as crucial, employers overwhelmingly listed the following:

- punctuality
- attendance
- ability to communicate
- positive attitude
- teamwork

Finally, when employers were asked to identify the most frequent reason for terminating an employee, 'tardiness' and 'absenteeism' were by far the most common responses.

We hope that our findings will help teachers and community-based organizations working to prepare young people for the world of work. Entry-level positions are just that: points of entry into the work world. As such, they provide both valuable experience and confidence to young people and help to prepare them for whatever careers they may pursue.

Dear Friend,

Thank you for taking the time to read and use this guide to entry-level employment in New York City. If you are a young person preparing to enter the world of work, this handbook can help you decide how to approach your first or second job. If you are an adult working with young people, First Steps can help you guide your students, children and clients through today's entry-level job market.

For New York City to remain vibrant and become an even greater city, all New Yorkers must have the opportunity to engage in meaningful work. We share with our colleagues, our communities and our families the conviction that all work is meaningful, and that the act of working and increasing self-sufficiency gives every individual dignity. This handbook, then, is a first step towards preparing all New Yorkers to enter the job market and walk that path of dignity.

Special thanks go to the New York City Partnership and the business leaders, educators, and other individuals who have collaborated to plan and produce this handbook. By recognizing the value of such a guide and working together to produce this handbook, they have demonstrated the collaborative spirit that New York City needs today. We applaud their efforts to build public/private partnerships, and invite every individual who lives or works in New York City to join hands to help make a more productive, exciting and livable New York City.

Hon. David N. Dinkins
Mayor
City of New York

Joseph A. Fernandez
Chancellor
New York City Public Schools

Dear Friend,

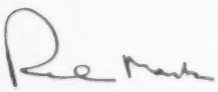
As New York City moves from a manufacturing economy to a service economy, we have witnessed a developing labor crisis. On one hand, the business community finds it more and more difficult to recruit qualified employees for thousands of entry-level positions; on the other hand, thousands of young people are unable to begin their careers because their skills do not match those required by corporations.

The New York City Partnership has developed a handbook that will help teachers, students and guidance counselors have a clearer sense of the qualifications needed for today's entry-level positions. We surveyed more than one hundred corporations to find out what skills they look for in beginning employees. This handbook contains the results of that survey.

We want to thank the many corporate human resource people who responded to our survey. We are especially grateful to AT&T for providing consulting services and underwriting the design of this booklet, Philip Morris for underwriting the cost of the printing, and Kathryn Alexander Enterprises, who conducted qualitative market research.

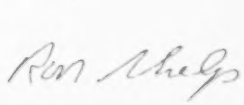
No issue is more important to the future of this city than the education of our youth. We hope this handbook will help lead to an education that will enable them to compete successfully in today's economy.

Sincerely,



Reuben Mark
Chairman, President &
Chief Executive Officer
Colgate-Palmolive Company
Chair, Education Committee
New York City Partnership

Sincerely,



Ronald K. Shelp
President &
Chief Executive Officer
New York City Partnership
& New York Chamber of
Commerce and Industry

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BOOKKEEPER

DESCRIPTION: Keeps complete records of an establishment's financial transactions. Verifies and enters details of transactions as they occur. May balance books and computer reports to show statistics such as cash receipts, expenditures, accounts payable, profits, and losses. May also calculate employee wages and prepare checks.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: High school diploma or equivalent required; some employers require 1-2 years of college. Accounting classes are very desirable.

READING/WRITING: Reading and writing skills are very important because of memos, letters, and written directions. Detailed and accurate recordkeeping is critical.

MATHEMATICS: Basic arithmetic, business math, some algebra, counting and making change, and attention to detail are critical.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Good oral communication skills and attention to details are very important because of frequent interaction with clients and constant examination of financial record books.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: May advance to supervisory bookkeeper, accounting section manager, office manager, or accountant, with appropriate education, training, or experience.

OTHER: Familiarity with an adding machine, cash register, calculator, and software packages such as Lotus 1-2-3 is critical.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma	*XXX*			
Post-HS or NYS License			*XXX*	
Reading		*XXX*		
Writing		*XXX*		
Mathematics				
Arithmetic	*XXX*			
Algebra	*XXX*			
Algebra +			*XXX*	
Oral Communications		*XXX*		
Interpersonal		*XXX*		
Typing				*XXX*
Word Processing				*XXX*
Filing				*XXX*
Computer Literacy				
Bilingual				*XXX*

CARPENTER

DESCRIPTION: Constructs, installs, and repairs structures and fixtures of wood, plywood, and wallboard. Uses handtools and powertools and conforms to local building codes. Duties include studying blueprints, sketches or building plans; shaping materials to prescribed measurements, erecting framework for structure and laying subflooring, building stairs and laying and installing partitions, verifying trueness of structure, selecting specified type of lumber or other material, and a variety of other related tasks.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: High school diploma, aptitude test and medical tests required for apprenticeship program which includes a combination of on-the-job training and classroom instruction. Usually lasts between 3-4 years.

READING/WRITING: Basic skills required for reading blueprints, floor plans, and instructions.

MATHEMATICS: Shop math, geometry and trigonometry are helpful for preparing layouts using a ruler, framing square, and calipers.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Oral skills are not emphasized as carpenters often work alone.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: With appropriate education, training, or experience, may advance to inspector carpenter, labor supervisor or supervisor of joiners.

OTHER: Good health and conditioning are important because standing, climbing, bending, and stooping is required. Will also have to operate handtools such as saws, hammers, chisels, planes, etc.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma	XXX			
Post-HS or NYS License	XXX			
Reading		XXX		
Writing			XXX	
Mathematics				
Arithmetic		XXX		
Algebra			XXX	
Algebra +				XXX
Oral Communications				XXX
Interpersonal				XXX
Typing				
Word Processing				
Filing				
Computer Literacy				
Bilingual				XXX

CHILD CARE WORKER

DESCRIPTION: Organizes and leads activities of pre-kindergarten children in nursery schools or in playrooms operated for customers of theaters, department stores, hotels, and similar establishments. Duties include helping children dress; organizing and participating in games; reading aloud to children; teaching activities and games such as drawing, painting, and other arts and crafts. Also will have to maintain discipline and serve meals and refreshments.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: High school diploma or equivalent usually required; teaching credential sometimes required. Courses in childhood education or developmental psychology helpful.

READING/WRITING: Reading and writing are required to read to children and write instructions, memos and business letters.

MATHEMATICS: Basic arithmetic is important.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Oral skills, patience, ability to relate to children are essential.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: May advance to nursery school or day-care teacher or teacher aide, with appropriate education, training or experience.

OTHER: Teaching ability and a desire to constantly be around children are critical.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma		XXX		
Post-HS or NYS License			XXX	
Reading		XXX		
Writing		XXX		
Mathematics				
Arithmetic			XXX	
Algebra				XXX
Algebra +				XXX
Oral Communications	XXX			
Interpersonal	XXX			
Typing				XXX
Word Processing				XXX
Filing				XXX
Computer Literacy				XXX
Bilingual				XXX

COMPUTER DATA ENTRY/PROGRAMMER

DESCRIPTION: Inputs data into a personal, mini- or mainframe computer via a keyboard, bar code reader, or scanner. Performs this function for banks, government agencies, insurance companies, service organizations, or stores with large inventories. Duties include checking for accuracy, printing out data, sorting and arranging data records, and general maintenance of computerized data steps.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: High school diploma or equivalent required. Vocational school or Associate's degree is usually required and a Bachelor's degree is preferred. Courses in mathematics, computer programming, and different software packages are helpful.

READING/WRITING: Basic reading and writing skills are important for recordkeeping, letters, memos, reports, and interoffice correspondence.

MATHEMATICS: Basic mathematics is critical, and advanced algebra is highly desirable.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Good oral communication is very important for presenting reports and interacting with other workers, supervisors and the public.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: May advance to manager of information services, or systems engineer, with appropriate education, experience, or training.

OTHER: Patience, persistence, an analytical mind and an enjoyment of mathematics are very helpful for this position.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma	*XXX*			
Post-HS or NYS License		*XXX*		
Reading		*XXX*		
Writing		*XXX*		
Mathematics	*XXX*			
Arithmetic				
Algebra		*XXX*		
Algebra +		*XXX*		
Oral Communications		*XXX*		
Interpersonal		*XXX*		
Typing				*XXX*
Word Processing				*XXX*
Filing				*XXX*
Computer Literacy	*XXX*			
Bilingual				*XXX*

FOOD SERVICE AIDE

DESCRIPTION: Serves customers of hotel restaurants, hospitals, fast food restaurants and other similar establishments. Duties include: selecting requested food items from serving or storage areas and assembling items on serving trays, tables or takeout bags; serving cold drinks and hot beverages. May cook or apportion french-fries or perform other such minor duties to prepare food, serve customers, or maintain orderliness in serving areas.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: High school diploma or equivalent usually preferred.

READING/WRITING: Basic reading and writing skills are important for reading signs or labels, letters, memos and for following written directions.

MATHEMATICS: Basic arithmetic and counting is necessary for measuring and weighing.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Good oral communication is important because of constant interaction with the public.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: May advance to short order cook, head cook, food planner or dietitian, with appropriate education, training or experience.

OTHER: Personnel officers from virtually all industries look at experience at fast food restaurants as extremely valuable.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma			XXX	
Post-HS or NYS License				XXX
Reading		XXX		
Writing			XXX	
Mathematics				
Arithmetic		XXX		
Algebra				XXX
Algebra +				XXX
Oral Communications			XXX	
Interpersonal			XXX	
Typing				
Word Processing				
Filing				
Computer Literacy				
Bilingual				XXX

HOME ATTENDANT

DESCRIPTION: Cares for elderly, convalescent or handicapped persons in patient's home, performing duties in the following areas: companionship, nutritional care, home management and health care. Specific tasks include: changing bed, washing and ironing patient's laundry, serving food for patient and other members of household following a specially prescribed diet. Also, a Home Attendant assists patients with physical movement when necessary, cleans and massages patient, administers prescribed oral medications, entertains patient, reads aloud and performs other miscellaneous household duties.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: New York State Department of Health requires a minimum of 65 classroom hours plus 30 hours of unsupervised training; high school diploma very important.

READING/WRITING: Basic skills are important and primarily involve reading labels, prescriptions, filling out forms and writing memos.

MATHEMATICS: Basic arithmetic is important for making change and spending money when appropriate.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Good interpersonal and communication skills are very important.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: May advance to a licensed practical nurse, with appropriate education, training, or experience.

OTHER: Home attendants must receive certification from the State of New York, but the necessary training to receive this certificate is available from many employers.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma		*XXX*		
Post-HS or NYS License	*XXX*			
Reading			*XXX*	
Writing			*XXX*	
Mathematics				
Arithmetic			*XXX*	
Algebra				*XXX*
Algebra +				*XXX*
Oral Communications		*XXX*		
Interpersonal		*XXX*		
Typing				*XXX*
Word Processing				*XXX*
Filing				*XXX*
Computer Literacy				
Bilingual				*XXX*

JANITOR/CLEANER

DESCRIPTION: Janitors and cleaners may work in a variety of commercial establishments (hotels, restaurants, beauty parlors), public institutions (hospitals, colleges) or in private offices and residential buildings. Cleaners often are required to sort, count, fold, mark, or carry linens, make beds, move furniture, sweep, mop, and dust.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: Does not usually require a high school diploma, but it is important for movement to other positions.

READING/WRITING: Basic reading ability is important because of the number of labels and occasional use of tools.

MATHEMATICS: Basic arithmetic is required for measuring chemicals and cleaners.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Self-motivation and an ability to monitor oneself are necessary because the work is often done alone with little direct supervision.

OTHER: May have to handle chemicals, fuels and equipment. Physical stamina and a tolerance for repetitive work are a plus as individuals must often clean large areas or buildings by themselves.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma		XXX		
Post-HS or NYS License				
Reading			XXX	
Writing			XXX	
Mathematics				
Arithmetic			XXX	
Algebra				
Algebra +				
Oral Communications				XXX
Interpersonal		XXX		
Typing				XXX
Word Processing				XXX
Filing				XXX
Computer Literacy				XXX
Bilingual				XXX

LEGAL ASSISTANT/PARALEGAL

DESCRIPTION: Researches law, investigates facts and prepares documents to assist lawyers. Researches and analyzes legal sources such as: statutes, recorded judicial decisions, legal articles, treaties; constructs pleadings, appeals, wills, contracts, deeds and trust instruments for review, approval and use by an attorney. May also prepare affidavits of documents, maintain document files and deliver subpoenas to witnesses and parties to action.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: High school diploma required, some college or a college degree is preferred.

READING/WRITING: Writing and reading skills are critical because a legal assistant is required to prepare office accounts, documents for litigation, memos, and business letters.

MATHEMATICS: Basic arithmetic is important.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Good oral communication skills are critical for interactions with lawyers, clients and other support staff.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: Advancement is limited by a requirement of extensive advanced education (law school and admission to the Bar).

OTHER: Knowledge of computer software packages including WordPerfect, Microsoft Word, and Lotus 1-2-3, is highly desirable.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma	XXX			
Post-HS or NYS License		XXX		
Reading	XXX			
Writing	XXX			
Mathematics				
Arithmetic			XXX	
Algebra				XXX
Algebra +				XXX
Oral Communications	XXX			
Interpersonal		XXX		
Typing			XXX	
Word Processing			XXX	
Filing			XXX	
Computer Literacy			XXX	
Bilingual				XXX

LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE

DESCRIPTION: A Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) cares for ill, injured, convalescent, and handicapped persons in hospitals, clinics, private homes, and other institutions. He or she often takes and records temperature, blood pressure, and pulse and respiration rates; dresses wounds, and administers first aid, alcohol rubs, and massages. LPNs must monitor patient progress and report changes in condition to medical personnel in charge. LPNs may perform routine laboratory work, sterilize equipment and supplies. They may also prepare food trays and feed patients, and answer patient distress calls.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: High school diploma or G.E.D. is required. LPNs must be licensed by passing the New York State board examination.

READING/WRITING: Basic reading and writing is very important in order to fill out charts, write progress reports, and make referrals.

MATHEMATICS: Knowledge of basic arithmetic is very important because LPNs are asked to record blood pressure, administer drugs, measure and weigh patients.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Relies heavily on oral communication and cooperation because of interaction with diverse individuals including patients, family members, doctors and other health care professionals. Precision and attention to detail are important.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: May advance to registered professional nurse, nursing supervisor or medical laboratory technician with appropriate education or experience.

OTHER: Physical strength and overall conditioning are needed for this job as LPNs do much moving and lifting of patients.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma	*XXX*			
Post-HS or NYS License	*XXX*			
Reading	*XXX*			
Writing		*XXX*		
Mathematics				
Arithmetic		*XXX*		
Algebra				*XXX*
Algebra +				*XXX*
Oral Communications		*XXX*		
Interpersonal		*XXX*		
Typing				*XXX*
Word Processing				*XXX*
Filing				*XXX*
Computer Literacy				*XXX*
Bilingual				*XXX*

MAIL CLERK

DESCRIPTION: Works in mailroom of business establishment. Sorts incoming mail for distribution and dispatches outgoing mail. Duties include opening envelopes, collecting, sorting, and delivering mail; examining, addressing, and re-addressing outgoing mail; folding and weighing mail.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: High school diploma or equivalent usually required. On the job training of up to one month required.

READING/WRITING: Basic reading and writing skills are very important for reading addresses on envelopes and other pieces of mail.

MATHEMATICS: Basic arithmetic and counting is necessary for this position.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Good oral communication is important for interacting with other workers, supervisors and the public.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: May advance to supervising mail clerk, with appropriate education, training or experience.

OTHER: Physical strength and conditioning are important for lifting, carrying, sorting, and bundling mail. Must have the ability to learn and keep up with mailing procedures and new postal regulations.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma		XXX		
Post-HS or NYS License				XXX
Reading		XXX		
Writing		XXX		
Mathematics				
Arithmetic			XXX	
Algebra				XXX
Algebra +				XXX
Oral Communications			XXX	
Interpersonal			XXX	
Typing				XXX
Word Processing				XXX
Filing			XXX	
Computer Literacy				XXX
Bilingual				XXX

MECHANIC

DESCRIPTION: Repairs and maintains machinery and mechanical equipment such as engines, motors, pneumatic tools, conveyor systems, and production machines and equipment. Uses handtools, powertools, and precision measuring and testing instruments. Duties include: diagnosing causes of problems, dismantling devices, inspecting machine parts, replacing defective parts, lubricating and cleaning parts.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: High school diploma or equivalent usually required. Courses in mechanical drawing, shop mathematics and blueprint reading are helpful.

READING/WRITING: Reading and writing are important for reading instruction labels and business letters.

MATHEMATICS: No formal requirement but basic arithmetic and shop mathematics are helpful.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Oral communication skills are relatively unimportant because of minimal contact with the public.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: May advance to maintenance supervisor, machinist, manufacturer's service representative, and tool-and-die-maker, with appropriate education, training, or experience.

OTHER: Physical strength and conditioning are important because of frequent stooping, kneeling and lifting of tools and machinery often weighing up to 100 pounds. Computer literacy is helpful, as computers play an increasingly important role in a mechanic's work.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma			*XXX*	
Post-HS or NYS License				*XXX*
Reading		*XXX*		
Writing			*XXX*	
Mathematics				*XXX*
Arithmetic				*XXX*
Algebra				*XXX*
Algebra +				*XXX*
Oral Communications				*XXX*
Interpersonal				*XXX*
Typing				
Word Processing				
Filing				
Computer Literacy				*XXX*
Bilingual				*XXX*

NURSE'S AIDE

DESCRIPTION: Assists in care of hospital patients under the supervision of nursing and medical staff. Duties include: responding to signal lights and bells to determine patients' needs; bathing, dressing, and undressing patients; serving and collecting food trays and feeding patients; recording temperatures; assisting in examinations and treatment.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: High school preferred. On-the-job training usually lasts 3–6 months. Courses in biology, health, home nursing and first aid are helpful.

READING/WRITING: Reading and some writing are necessary for reading labels, prescriptions and for completing forms, charts, and memos.

MATHEMATICS: Basic arithmetic for measuring and recording temperature, weight, and fluid intake.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Good oral skills and ability to interact with elderly, and/or sick patients, as well as health care professionals.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: May advance to licensed practical nurse, surgical technician, central supply supervisor, or medical, chiropractic, dental, pediatric or physician's assistant, with appropriate education, training, or experience.

OTHER: Physical strength and conditioning a plus as nurse's aides lift, push and assist patients either standing or walking.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma		XXX		
Post-HS or NYS License				XXX
Reading		XXX		
Writing		XXX		
Mathematics				
Arithmetic		XXX		
Algebra			XXX	
Algebra +				XXX
Oral Communications		XXX		
Interpersonal		XXX		
Typing				
Word Processing				
Filing		XXX		
Computer Literacy				
Bilingual				XXX

OFFICE CLERK

DESCRIPTION: Files correspondence, cards, invoices, records, reports. Distributes mail, posts information to records, compiles data, tracks folders and other materials. Performs clerical work in searching for information and investigating files, inserting additional data on file records, and keeping files current. May post and distribute mail, answer phone and perform duties similar to those of secretaries or receptionists.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: High school diploma or equivalent preferred.

READING/WRITING: Writing is very important for memos, forms, recordkeeping, letters and labels.

MATHEMATICS: Basic arithmetic is important for occasional counting, inventory and maintenance of financial records.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Good oral communication skills are very important for interactions with the public, supervisors and other office workers.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: May advance to chief clerk, secretary, administrative assistant, office manager, or clerical supervisor, with appropriate education, training, or experience.

OTHER: Knowledge of all general office skills is very important as workers are often called upon to perform a variety of tasks that may include typing, filing, writing, bookkeeping and operating a postage meter, copy machine, calculator and/or computer.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma		*XXX*		
Post-HS or NYS License				*XXX*
Reading		*XXX*		
Writing		*XXX*		
Mathematics				
Arithmetic		*XXX*		
Algebra				*XXX*
Algebra +				*XXX*
Oral Communications		*XXX*		
Interpersonal		*XXX*		
Typing		*XXX*		
Word Processing		*XXX*		
Filing		*XXX*		
Computer Literacy			*XXX*	
Bilingual				*XXX*

RECEPTIONIST

DESCRIPTION: Receives callers at establishment, determines nature of business, directs callers to destination. Answers phone calls, obtains caller's name, time of call, nature of business, and person called. May issue visitor's pass when required, make future appointments and answer inquiries.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: High school diploma or equivalent usually required.

READING/WRITING: Basic writing is important because receptionist may be called upon to write memos or business letters.

MATHEMATICS: Basic arithmetic is important.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Excellent oral communication skills, grammar, and personal poise are critical.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: May advance to secretary, administrative assistant, personnel clerk, clerk-typist, medical assistant or dental assistant, with appropriate education, training, or experience.

OTHER: Basic familiarity with other office skills (ie. word processing, writing, typing) is desirable but not required.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma		XXX		
Post-HS or NYS License				XXX
Reading			XXX	
Writing			XXX	
Mathematics				
Arithmetic			XXX	
Algebra				XXX
Algebra +				XXX
Oral Communications	XXX			
Interpersonal				
Typing				XXX
Word Processing				XXX
Filing				XXX
Computer Literacy				XXX
Bilingual				XXX

RETAIL SALESPERSON

DESCRIPTION: Retail salespeople work with various merchandise in a wide variety of stores or other sales establishments. Salespeople assist customers in locating desired goods or satisfactory substitutions, and may demonstrate the use of merchandise. They also may examine defective articles returned by customers to determine if a refund or replacement should be made.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: High school diploma or equivalent is required.

READING/WRITING: Basic skills needed in order to keep accurate records, fill out forms and write memos.

MATHEMATICS: Knowledge of arithmetic, primarily for counting, making change and accurate money exchange, is very important.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Excellent communication and interpersonal skills are required because of constant interaction with the public.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: May advance to assistant buyer, buyer, department manager, store manager or manufacturer's representative, with appropriate education, experience or training.

OTHER: Knowledge of adding machines, calculators, cash registers and/or computers is a critical aspect of this position. Personal appearance, hygiene and a tolerance for constant walking or standing are also vital to success.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma	*XXX*			
Post-HS or NYS License				*XXX*
Reading			*XXX*	
Writing			*XXX*	
Mathematics				
Arithmetic		*XXX*		
Algebra				*XXX*
Algebra +				*XXX*
Oral Communications		*XXX*		
Interpersonal	*XXX*			
Typing				*XXX*
Word Processing				*XXX*
Filing				*XXX*
Computer Literacy			*XXX*	
Bilingual			*XXX*	

SECRETARY

DESCRIPTION: Schedules appointments, gives information to callers, takes dictation, and relieves officials of clerical work and minor administrative and business details. Duties also include reading and routing mail, composing and typing correspondence, filing, answering telephones, supervising and training clerical staff, and operating office equipment.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: High school diploma or equivalent usually required. Associate's degree or secretarial school certificate preferred. Courses in speech, secretarial services and accounting are helpful.

READING/WRITING: Good reading and writing skills, particularly good grammar, spelling, and punctuation, are critical as secretaries often compose and edit business letters, reports, general correspondence, and business forms.

MATHEMATICS: Basic arithmetic is necessary for occasional accounting.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Oral skills, tact, patience, poise and a clear speaking voice are essential in this position. Ability to organize work and relate to different people.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: May advance to office manager, administrative assistant or office supervisor, with appropriate education, training, or experience.

OTHER: Typing is critical, forty (40) words per minute is considered a minimum requirement. Knowledge of word processing software such as WordPerfect, MicroSoft Word, MultiMate, as well as spreadsheets such as Lotus 1-2-3 are essential.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma	*XXX*			
Post-HS or NYS License		*XXX*		
Reading	*XXX*			
Writing	*XXX*			
Mathematics				
Arithmetic			*XXX*	
Algebra				*XXX*
Algebra +				*XXX*
Oral Communications	*XXX*			
Interpersonal	*XXX*			
Typing	*XXX*			
Word Processing	*XXX*			
Filing		*XXX*		
Computer Literacy	*XXX*			
Bilingual				*XXX*

SWITCHBOARD/PBX OPERATOR

DESCRIPTION: Operates cord or cordless switchboard to provide answering service for clients. Greets callers and announces name or phone number of client. Records and delivers messages, furnishes information, accepts orders, and relays calls. Places telephone calls at request of client and locates client in emergencies. May also date, stamp and file messages.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: No formal requirement, but a high school diploma is desirable.

READING/WRITING: Basic reading and writing is important in order to take messages, process forms and/or code sheets.

MATHEMATICS: Basic arithmetic is important.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Excellent oral skills, a clear speaking voice, and an ability to handle multiple calls are critical.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: May advance to receptionist, secretary or administrative assistant, with appropriate education, training or experience.

OTHER: A pleasant demeanor is important because of constant verbal interaction with the public. Additionally, experience with computers is becoming more important.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma		*XXX*		
Post-HS or NYS License				*XXX*
Reading			*XXX*	
Writing			*XXX*	
Mathematics				
Arithmetic			*XXX*	
Algebra				*XXX*
Algebra +				*XXX*
Oral Communications	*XXX*			
Interpersonal	*XXX*			
Typing				*XXX*
Word Processing				*XXX*
Filing				*XXX*
Computer Literacy			*XXX*	
Bilingual				*XXX*

TEACHER AIDE

DESCRIPTION: Assists teaching staff of public or private elementary or secondary school by performing any combination of the following instructional tasks in the classroom: discussing, preparing and planning lesson outlines; planning, preparing, and developing various teaching aids; presenting or lecturing on subject matter to students; preparing, administering and grading examinations.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: High school diploma or equivalent preferred.

READING/WRITING: Reading and writing are both important for taking notes and writing lesson plans, comments on assignments, memos and business letters.

MATHEMATICS: Basic arithmetic is sufficient.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Good oral skills are critical for communicating with students, teachers, parents, and administrators.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: May advance to teacher, with appropriate education.

OTHER: A pleasant demeanor, patience and a desire to work with children are very important in this position.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma		XXX		
Post-HS or NYS License				XXX
Reading		XXX		
Writing		XXX		
Mathematics				
Arithmetic			XXX	
Algebra				XXX
Algebra +				XXX
Oral Communications	XXX			
Interpersonal	XXX			
Typing				XXX
Word Processing				XXX
Filing				XXX
Computer Literacy				XXX
Bilingual				XXX

TELLER

DESCRIPTION: Tellers generally work in banks or in financial offices of other institutions or businesses. They receive and pay out money, and keep records of money and negotiable instruments involved in various banking and other financial transactions. Tellers may open and close accounts, receive checks and cash for deposit, verify amounts, examine checks and endorsements, enter deposits in passbooks, and issue receipts. They cash checks, adjust and verify balances, compute interest and service charges, and place holds on accounts for uncollected funds. Tellers generally handle a great deal of cash, order supplies of cash to meet daily needs, count incoming cash, and prepare cash for shipment. They may also exchange foreign and domestic currencies, and issue travelers checks and savings bonds.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: High school diploma or equivalent is required and tellers must undergo a training and probationary period.

READING/WRITING: Basic reading and writing and detailed recordkeeping are very important.

MATHEMATICS: Strong skills in basic arithmetic are critical.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Good oral communication skills and a pleasant demeanor are essential.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: Workers may advance to lead teller, head teller, chief teller, or branch manager, with additional training, education or experience.

OTHER: Use of a calculator, adding machine and/or a computer is commonplace today. Tellers are also expected to be able to lift a cash box that may weigh from 20 to 50 pounds and may have to stand for extended lengths of time.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma	*XXX*			
Post-HS or NYS License	*XXX*			
Reading		*XXX*		
Writing		*XXX*		
Mathematics				
Arithmetic	*XXX*			
Algebra				*XXX*
Algebra +				*XXX*
Oral Communications	*XXX*			
Interpersonal		*XXX*		
Typing				*XXX*
Word Processing				*XXX*
Filing				*XXX*
Computer Literacy				
Bilingual				

WAITER/WAITRESS

DESCRIPTION: Serves food to patrons at counters and tables of coffeeshops, lunchrooms, and other dining establishments. Duties include presenting menus, answering questions, taking orders, writing or memorizing orders. May also assist in light food preparation, and clearing or resetting tables.

REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION: High school diploma or equivalent preferred.

READING/WRITING: Reading and writing are important for completion of checks, business forms, and some inventory.

MATHEMATICS: Basic arithmetic, counting and tax computation skills are very important.

INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION: Oral skills and an ability to greet and serve customers are crucial. Personal organization and ability to cater to others under pressure is also very important.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY: May advance to head waiter/waitress, host/hostess, steward, cashier, or restaurant manager, with appropriate education, training, or experience.

OTHER: Ability to work under pressure, memorize menus, carry trays and remain organized are helpful.

JOB & SKILL REQUIREMENT MATRIX

	Critical	*Very Important*	*Important*	*Helpful*
HS Diploma			XXX	
Post-HS or NYS License				XXX
Reading			XXX	
Writing			XXX	
Mathematics				
Arithmetic		XXX		
Algebra				XXX
Algebra +				XXX
Oral Communications	XXX			
Interpersonal	XXX			
Typing				
Word Processing				
Filing				
Computer Literacy				
Bilingual				XXX

APPENDIX

DESCRIPTION OF ESSENTIAL WORK SKILLS

Punctuality: Employees should be at work and ready to work at the appointed time.

If the starting time for work is 9:00 a.m., the employer expects an employee to start work at 9:00 a.m. Employees should arrive prior to their starting time so that they can take their coats off, freshen up, and be ready to work at the starting time. If, for some reason, an employee is going to be late, he/she must call the employer to let him/her know.

Employers have a set time period for lunch, and they expect employees to take that amount of time, maybe less, but certainly not more.

Attendance: Employees are expected to be on the job every work day unless they have requested time off from their supervisor ahead of time.

When an employee cannot come to work, due to an illness or major problem, he or she must call in before his/her starting time or as close to that time as possible to let the supervisor know of an absence.

Ability to Communicate: Employees must be able to communicate clearly with customers, supervisors and fellow workers. Correct grammar, a clear voice and an ability to interact with others is essential.

Slang and non-standard English are fine for communicating with friends and family, but absolutely out of place at work. In a service economy the ability to communicate clearly is an absolute necessity, as unclear messages can result in costly mistakes.

Positive Attitude: Employees work together for at least 7 hours a day, day after day, week after week. Employers look for employees with good dispositions, people who want to work, who are enjoyable to be with, and who contribute to making the workplace a pleasant environment.

Teamwork: Employees are expected to work in cooperation, with each employee playing a role in completing a job.

In today's workplace jobs are usually connected, with one task relating to the next. As with sports teams, if one person does not do his/her job, the whole team suffers and everyone has to work that much harder. Every employee is an integral part of a team.

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